

Cultivating and Applying Innovative and Transformative Research Across Academia, Government, and Industry

Innovative Approaches to Enduring Challenges

The Acquisition Innovation Research Center (AIRC) was established in September 2020 by the Department of Defense (DoD) to infuse innovation and alternative disciplines from academia to better respond to rapidly changing threats and technological advances.

As an applied academic research arm of DoD, AIRC pairs DoD acquisition experts with faculty & students from over 25 leading universities to translate leading edge research into practical applications, accelerating acquisition responsiveness to warfighter and operator needs.

AIRC focuses on:

Researching acquisition policies and practices and applying new disciplines, technologies, and analytical capabilities to enhance strategic decision making.

Developing pilots and experiments to prototype, test, and demonstrate new acquisition practices for transition to broader use.

Enhancing education and training efforts to improve the defense acquisition executives and workforce.

Cultivating emerging best practices that span across research, engineering, acquisition, and sustainment.

Broadening its network of experts and partners across academia, government, and industry.

Conducting projects that bring “out of the box” thinking to address the most critical challenges facing the DoD.

MISSION

Improve Acquisition Outcomes

A learning organization that reaches across **academia** to enable **DoD** innovation and evidence-based decision making through **applied** policy, organizational change management, and workforce development. **Adaptively engage faculty based on current needs (rather than a standing professional workforce).**



Transformation

The Acquisition Innovation Research Center (AIRC), housed within the Office of the Under Secretary of Defense for Acquisition and Sustainment (OUSD(A&S)), is represented by a national network of expertise spanning academia, government, and industry. The AIRC leverages its multi-university partnerships to connect DoD domain experts with faculty-led research teams with backgrounds in engineering, management, business, law, economics, policy, data science, and more. These multidisciplinary teams deliver innovative research, which they then apply in practical pilot projects focused on addressing enduring challenges in defense acquisition policy, practice, education, and training.

AIRC Innovation Framework



Leveraging a Network of Faculty and Researchers

Working with AIRC and its Collaboration Network

AIRC engages the talents of faculty, students, researchers, and subject-matter experts from its network of collaborative universities to deliver innovative academic analysis, policy alternatives, and practical applications. Through this approach, AIRC delivers improved defense acquisition outcomes powered by evidence-based, data-driven decision making. These results benefit stakeholders from across the extended DoD Acquisition Enterprise, while also supporting and empowering academic researchers and national thought leaders.

AIRC Distinctions:

Applied — Connects research teams with DoD leaders and users through pilots and experiments.

Innovative — Reaches untapped expertise across multiple disciplines from a broad network of leading universities.

Action-Oriented — Focuses on transitioning and scaling results.

Nimble — Delivers impactful results aligned with emerging priorities within responsive timelines.

Efficient — Streamlined and flat.

COLLABORATIVE UNIVERSITIES



AIRC can collaborate with any accredited Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) or Minority Institutions (MI) across the United States

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